UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/825,717	04/04/2001	Richard W. Stoakley	MFCP.76395	3160

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EXAMINER
ZHOU, TING

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
2173	

DATE MAILED: 10/27/2003

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

PTO-90C (Rev. 10/03)

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)
	09/825,717	STOAKLEY ET AL.
	Examiner	Art Unit
	Ting Zhou	2173

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE <u>3</u> MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1)☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on _____ .

2a)☐ This action is **FINAL**.   2b)☒ This action is non-final.

3)☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4)☒ Claim(s) <u>1-21</u> is/are pending in the application.

    4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5)☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

6)☒ Claim(s) <u>1-21</u> is/are rejected.

7)☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.

8)☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9)☒ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10)☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a)☐ accepted or b)☐ objected to by the Examiner.

    Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

11)☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a)☐ approved b)☐ disapproved by the Examiner.

    If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.

12)☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

13)☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

    a)☐ All b)☐ Some * c)☐ None of:

      1.☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.

      2.☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____ .

      3.☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

    * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

14)☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).

    a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.

15)☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)

2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)

3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) _____ .

4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____ .

5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)

6) ☐ Other: _____ .

U.S. Patent and Trademark Office

PTOL-326 (Rev. 04-01)   **Office Action Summary**   Part of Paper No. 2

DETAILED ACTION

Specification

1.   The abstract of the disclosure is objected to because of the following minor informalities:

a comma should be inserted at the end of line 4 to clarify the meaning of the sentence. The

sentence should read – The system monitors items that are placed in the notification, --.

Correction is required. See MPEP § 608.01(b).

2.   The disclosure is objected to because of the following informalities:

a.   The wrong drawing (Figure 7) is referred to on line 18 of page 13. The intended

figure containing the referenced characters is Figure 3.

b.   All occurrences of the word "unhiding" within the application should be changed

since "unhiding" is not a legitimate word in the English language. Although the

examiner recognizes that the applicants have the right to be their own lexicographer, it is

suggested that "unhiding" be replaced with words such as –revealed-- or –displayed-- to

comply with proper grammatical styles.

Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Objections

3.   Claims 6, 7, 13, 14, 20 and 21 are objected to for being in improper dependent form. The

claims are written in the form of a preamble made to depend on another claim. The stated

preamble is not given patentable weight as it fails to breathe life, meaning, and vitality into the

claims. As such, the claims fail to further limit the subject matter of the claim(s) upon which

they depend. See MPEP §§ 608.01(n) and 2111.02.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the

basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on
sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

4.   Claims 1-7 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Oran et al. U.S.

Patent 5,617,526.

Referring to claim 1, Oran et al. teach a method in a computer system for displaying and

organizing notifications on a display (seen in Figure 1, reference character "14") having a

notification area (column 1, lines 32-38). Specifically, they disclose associating the printing and

email applications with respective icons on the display area and then monitoring those

applications for activity (column 4, lines 29-33 and lines 41-46).

Referring to claim 2, Oran et al. teach, in Figure 6, arranging the notification area items

(icons) in the order in which the notifications occur. As can be seen from this figure, the printer

icon appears before the email icon because the program received notifications for activity from the printer application first.

Referring to claims 3 and 4, Oran et al. show comparison of the level of activity of the monitored item against a predetermined threshold value, hiding that item if the level of activity is less than the threshold value and redisplaying it upon the occurrence of activity by example of the email notification icon, recited in column 4. When there are no new email notifications received from the email application (the level of activity is below the expected value for an icon to be displayed in the display area), the email icon is hidden (not shown) on the notification area (lines 39-50). However, when activity is detected (an incoming email message), the email icon is redisplayed (lines 45-47).

Referring to claim 5, Oran et al. teach unhiding the icons in order of the most recently active application through display of the notification icons that has the most recent level of activity, as recited in column 4, lines 39-47.

Referring to claim 6, Oran et al. teach a computer-readable storage medium containing computer-executable instructions for performing the method recited in claim 1 (column 9, lines 1-21).

Referring to claim 7, Oran et al. teach a computer system operable to execute the displaying of notifications, as mentioned in claim 1. The aforementioned computer system contains a processor (CPU), a memory and an operating environment (operating system), as recited in column 2, lines 63-67 and continuing onto column 3, lines 1-3.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all

obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negatived by the manner in which the invention was made.

5.   Claims 8-14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Oran et al.

U.S. Patent 5,617,526, in view of Gorbet et al. U.S. Patent 6,542,463.

Referring to claim 8, Oran et al. teach a computer system having a graphical user

interface (GUI) for displaying and organizing notifications on a display (Figure 1 and column 4,

lines 29-46). However, they do not teach retrieving and displaying a chevron icon and removing

the chevron icon when there are no more hidden items. Gorbet et al. teach a graphical user

interface capable of displaying notifications similar to that of Oran et al. In addition, they further

teach displaying a chevron icon (the light bulb tip icon show by reference character "72" in

Figure 2B) for the hidden balloon notification text box. Upon meeting an unhide criteria (tip

icon is selected), the notification is displayed on the screen and when there are no hidden items

(all of the notification text boxes has been viewed), the chevron icon (light bulb tip icon) is

removed (column 5, lines 9-17 and column 8, lines 30-52). A chevron icon is defined in the

specification of the application as being a placeholder icon for the hidden items. It is noted that

the light bulb tip icon disclosed in the Gorbet et al. reference is a placeholder icon, used for the

hidden tips displayed in text boxes. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the

art, having the teachings of Oran et al. and Gorbet et al. before him at the time the invention was made, to modify the GUI for displaying and organizing notification icons taught by Oran et al. to include the use of the chevron icon of Gorbet et al. One would have been motivated to make such a combination to save system space and resources by reducing the number of items directly shown to the user. The use of a placeholder icon would allow the interface to display notifications only when the user wishes to see it.

Referring to claim 9, while Oran et al. teach all of the limitations as applied to the claims above, they fail to teach receiving a chevron entry selection signal indicative of a user selection of the chevron icon. Gorbet et al. teach, in column 8, lines 41-45, the use of a chevron selection signal (tip balloon), representing the user has selected the chevron tip icon (light bulb tip icon) and in response to that, displaying the hidden notification items (text boxes containing the hidden tips). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art, having the teachings of Oran et al. and Gorbet et al. before him at the time the invention was made, to modify the GUI of Oran et al. to include the use of the tip balloon, as taught by Gorbet et al. It would have been advantageous for one to utilize such a combination in order to correlate each icon with their associated functions. For example, by associating the light bulb with a hidden notification and the tip balloon with selected notifications, the users can easily tell by looking at the icons displayed whether a tip is hidden or being viewed.

Referring to claim 10, while Oran et al. teach all of the limitations as applied to the claims above, they fail to teach equating the unhide criteria with the selection of the entry selection signal. Gorbet et al. teach the selection of the light bulb tip icon as the unhide criteria. Upon selection of this signal, indicative of user selection of the notification item icon, the

previously hidden tip balloon along with the notification item (tip box) are displayed (column 8,

lines 41-43 and Figure 2B). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art,

having the teachings of Oran et al. and Gorbet et al. before him at the time the invention was

made, to modify the GUI of Oran et al. to include the selection of the tip icon as the unhide

criteria, as taught by Gorbet et al. One would have been motivated to make such a combination

in order to make it fast and simple for the users to view the hidden notifications; they simply

have to select the tip icon once to view the tips that were previously hidden.

Referring to claim 11, Oran et al. teach the display of the notification icon in the

notification area on the display, as shown in Figure 3.

Referring to claim 12, Oran et al. teach the placement of the notification item icon on the

left of the notification area (Figure 4 and Figure 6). As shown in the figures, the mail icon is

placed to the left of the printer icon.

Referring to claim 13, Oran et al. teach a computer-readable storage medium containing

computer-executable instructions (column 9, lines 1-21).

Referring to claim 14, Oran et al. teach a computer system containing a processor (CPU),

a memory and an operating environment (operating system), as recited in column 2, lines 63-67

and continuing onto column 3, lines 1-3.

6.   Claims 15-18 and 20-21 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over

Oran et al. U.S. Patent 5,617,526, and further in view of Chari et al. U.S. Patent 6,553,416.

Referring to claim 15, Oran et al. disclose a graphical user interface including a display

and the ability to display notification items and notification item icons (column 4, lines 29-33

and lines 41-46). However, they do not teach the display of descriptions associated with

notifications and options for configuring notification items. Chari et al. teach a system capable

of managing and displaying notifications similar to that of Oran et al. In addition, they further

teach displaying a description associated with the notification (Figure 5) and the ability to

configure notification items (column 3, lines 21-25). It would have been obvious to one of

ordinary skill in the art, having the teachings of Oran et al. and Chari et al. before him at the time

the invention was made, to modify the GUI of Oran et al. to include the notification item

descriptions taught by Chari et al. One would have been motivated to make such a combination

to give users flexibility to configure the way they want the notifications to be displayed and to

allow users to easily see what the notification items represent.

Referring to claim 16, while Oran et al. disclose all of the limitations as applied to the

claims above, they fail to teach a selection signal representing a choice of behavior for the

notification item. Chari et al. teach the use of a red bell icon (reference character "414-428" in

Figure 4A) indicative of a user selection for the behavior of the notification items (system alerts),

as recited in column 12, lines 1-9. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art,

having the teachings of Oran et al. and Chari et al. before him at the time the invention was

made, to modify the GUI of Oran et al. to include the selection signal taught by Chari et al. It

would have been advantageous for one to utilize such a combination because it allows the users

to easily view the selection choices they have made for the notification behavior, which makes it

easier for them to modify their choices as well.

Referring to claim 17, Oran et al. disclose all of the limitations as applied to the claims

above. However, they fail to disclose a default state that can be set for each notification item

behavior. Chari et al. disclose a set default state for the behavior of the system notification items (receive and display all alerts received from all servers), as recited in column 11, lines 53-58. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art, having the teachings of Oran et al. and Chari et al. before him at the time the invention was made, to modify the GUI of Oran et al. to include the default state taught by Chari et al. One would have been motivated to make such a combination so the system notifications would have a value even when no behavior has been specified by the user, therefore, it will never have an ambiguous null value.

Referring to claim 18, Oran et al. teach all of the limitations as applied to the claims above. They also teach the display of the notification icon in an order associated with the appearance of the item in the notification area, as can be seen from Figure 6. However, they do not teach the display of the description of the notifications in that same order. As shown in Figure 6, Chari et al. teach the display of the notification descriptions in the order of their appearance (according to the date and time of occurrence) in the notification area. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art, having the teachings of Oran et al. and Chari et al. before him at the time the invention was made, to modify the GUI of Oran et al. to include the display of the notifications and their descriptions in the order of their occurrence, as taught by Chari et al. It would have been advantageous for one to utilize such a combination in order to allow the users to view the oldest notifications and their corresponding descriptions first. This way, the computer system will be kept up to date by discarding notifications according to the earlier occurring items.

Referring to claim 20, Oran et al. teach a computer-readable storage medium containing computer-executable instructions (column 9, lines 1-21).

Referring to claim 21, Oran et al. teach a computer system containing a processor (CPU), a memory and an operating environment (operating system), as recited in column 2, lines 63-67 and continuing onto column 3, lines 1-3.

7.   Claim 19 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Oran et al. U.S. Patent 5,617,526 and Chari et al. U.S. Patent 6,553,416, as applied to claim 15 above, and further in view of Brown et al. U.S. Patent 5,673,403. Referring to claim 19, while Oran et al. and Chari et al. teach all of the limitations as applied to claim 15 above, they fail to teach addition of new items beyond a maximum by replacing the oldest items sequentially. Brown et al. teach a graphical user interface similar to that of Oran et al. and Chari et al. In addition, Brown et al. further teach removing bitmaps when the server has reached its maximum capability in least recently used order (column 8, lines 25-35). Therefore, the oldest items (bitmaps) would be replaced by the new items. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art, having the teachings of Oran et al., Chari et al. and Brown et al. before him at the time the was made, to modify the GUI of Oran et al. and Chari et al. to include the replacement of the least recently used item with the new item, as taught by Brown et al. One would have been motivated to make such a combination in order to allow users to view the most recent notification items on the display.

8.   The prior art made of record on form PTO-892 and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. Applicant is required under 37 C.F.R. § 1.111(c) to consider

these references fully when responding to this action. The documents cited therein teach

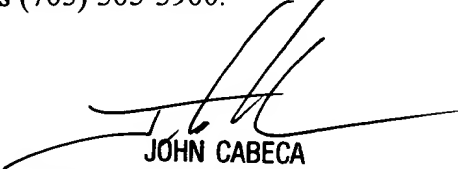electronic books with similar mechanisms for note taking and retrieval.

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the

examiner should be directed to Ting Zhou whose telephone number is (703) 305-0328. The

examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday 7:15 am - 3:45pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's

supervisor, John Cabeca can be reached on 703) 308-3116. The fax phone numbers for the

organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are (703) 872-9306 for regular

communications and (703) 872-9306 for After Final communications.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding

should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 305-3900.

JOHN CABECA
TZ   SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER
October 16, 2003   TECHNOLOGY CENTER 2100